

Poetry of the Assassination Reed Whittemore

THE NEW REPUBLIC

November 21, 1964, 35 cents

Wanted: A Modern House

Lyndon Johnson the healer, some believe, has been so charged with power by the

people that henceforth he need only write his prescription for the Great Society and the Congress will promptly fill it. The needs of the poor, the jobless, the sick, uneducated and unskilled will be met. Have not the Democrats, after all, a more than two-to-one majority in that often obstreperous and always unwieldy body—the House? And have not 61.4 percent of the voters given their assent to the President's general aims? Mandates, however, have a way of shrinking with wear. Within six months after his inauguration in 1937, Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose manipulative talents were no less than Mr. Johnson's and whose electoral and popular triumph the preceding November was very similar to Johnson's this year, was hard put to find a Congressional majority for his program. By August, 1937, that program, *The New Republic* noted, had "already been whittled to a minimum. . . . A large number of Congressmen, Democrats as well as Republicans, are sick of the New Deal, or any new deal, and want to sink back into their old ways of thought and action." For awhile in '65, no doubt, the glow—and in some instances the burning heat—of this November's mandate will assure warm consideration of Presidential requests; it will be "all the way with LBJ." But unless history is totally misleading, as time goes by some of the troops will begin to tire, to stumble, to fall out. That is when the President will have to hustle for votes—and especially votes for such unpopular causes as foreign aid. Now, when forward-looking policies command the sympathy of about

(Continued on page 11)

T.R.B.

from
Washington

What Sort of Budget?

★ We are going to find out what kind of an Administration we have from the next budget. This will go to Congress in January. It is being prepared now and will be a blueprint of Johnson planning. Apparently the President is going to bow to the silly myth of not spending over \$100 billion. This means that the public sector of the economy – the money spent for schools, hospitals, public service and welfare – will continue to be starved.

Every year the population increases about three million. There are more letters for the postman to carry, more cars for the roads to carry, more overcrowded schools and hospitals. The Gross National Product for this year will show a huge jump – \$40 billion over last year. Never mind – government expenditures must be kept below an arbitrary ceiling, picked out of sheer totemism because it is an even number and has 11 ciphers.

This is the "old shoe" myth of American politics. Make the children wear last year's shoes; maybe their feet are bigger but their shoes must be kept the same size! Never mind aches and corns and ills in later life. The government is too big, too expensive, let us retrench at all costs.

In the past four years the government has exploded one economic myth after another; the chasm we have crossed is extraordinary. Now Washington is boldly using planned deficits to stimulate the economy (something the rest of the world has long done, and that US academic economists have long urged). Eisenhower was passionately opposed to using the budget as a stabilizer; he

had three recessions in eight years; there hasn't been one since he left. We are now in the longest peacetime business advance in history, and no end in sight. The new economics works.

Chief architect for it is Walter Heller. He has tutored two Presidents and brought brilliant young economists here. One is Kermit Gordon, former member of the Council of Economic Advisers. When Mr. Gordon studied at Oxford his tutor was Harold Wilson. Now Gordon is US Budget Director and Wilson British Prime Minister. When Mr. Heller was in London last week he arranged final details of fellow-economist Wilson's visit here next month.

President Johnson won business support for his tax cut by cutting federal expenditures. He apparently feels obligated to keep on showing he is "frugal" by staying under the self-imposed \$100 billion ceiling. Well, we guess he can do it for just so long. If his anti-poverty program is to mean anything he must spend more money. Maybe Secretary McNamara can trim another billion or so off defense spending and give him some leeway there. But sooner or later those children's feet are going to grow out of their cruel political shoes. Wonder how Kermit Gordon will explain to his old tutor Harold Wilson the miserable myths that still bind feet here, and minds!

Changing the Rules

★ Democratic liberals have got a whale of a majority in Congress, and after talking to some of their leaders in the House we have an idea that, at last, they are going to reform the rules. They have the power; do they have the nerve? Here are examples. Four years ago the House passed a federal school construction bill and the Senate approved it in amended form. But it never became law. The autocratic House Rules Committee, seven to five, refused to let it go to conference. It refused to let the members vote, yes or no. It looks now as though the tyrannical Rules Committee might be curbed, once and for all, not by half-measures like enlarging its membership, but by reviving the 1949 "21-day rule" which permits a bill to be yanked out from it if it won't act in 21 days.

Or take another case. People in the District of Columbia haven't had home rule for generations; every year for 16 years the Southern conservatives who run the House DC committee refuse to report out a home rule bill. (Other committees often act arbitrarily, too.) So now comes a proposed remedy: if advocates of a measure can get 100 signatures, a committee will be "discharged" from considering a bill; that is, the bill will go to the floor, to be voted on, one way or another. Only bills that are on a Presidential program will have this preferred track. It seems reasonable enough, doesn't it, that if a President makes a recommendation to Congress he should at least have the courtesy to see it voted on?

Half a dozen other major rules reforms are in the works. They are all intended to knock out ancient roadblocks, built up mostly by conservatives in position of power by seniority.

The Republican Mess

★ Republicans probably won't thank us for the advice, but we shall give it anyway. They are in a dreadful mess, and it endangers the two-party system. Three weeks after Adlai Stevenson was defeated in 1956, Democratic national chairman Paul Butler called a meeting of his executive committee in Washington, and set up the famous Democratic Advisory Committee. It was a national council of elders – Truman, Stevenson, Harriman, Humphrey, Kefauver, Jack Kennedy, and others were members. The GOP should do likewise. The GOP had an Advisory Council in 1943; now they badly need to revive it.

The trouble with their regular National Committee is that it is made up of nonentities (picked on a state-by-state basis); the trouble with the GOP governors' conference is that it is geographically limited. Some of the more discerning members, like Senator Morton, Kentucky, and Representative Laird, Wisconsin, see the need of a new, all-star, collectivized leadership group to plan, heal and speak for the shaken party.

... Word that the GOP ended the campaign with a surplus was like discovering that a bankrupt had a cache of cash. ...

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The Bomb Now

President Johnson's main foreign policy tasks are to learn how to live with a China that now has the atomic bomb, and a Europe that still, for the most part, hasn't. China's bomb is not likely to have much military significance for a long time, but that is beside the point. The point is that the bomb has become a political factor whose importance increases almost in proportion as the serious chances of its being used as a military weapon decrease. This is well illustrated by the current situation in Europe, and the continued hubbub over the project known as the multilateral force, or MLF.

This idea of a mixed-crew nuclear navy originated in the US, ostensibly to give the European allies a more direct sense of participation in the control and use of nuclear weapons, and so hopefully prevent them (especially the Germans) developing a craving for nuclear weapons of their own. But the British, who helped to develop the American bomb, already had their own, and at Nassau the US promised that the British would have Polaris submarines as well, which infuriated General de Gaulle and confirmed him in his intention to proceed with a French nuclear force. The British regard the mixed-crew navy as expensive military nonsense. The Labour Party strongly opposed the MLF – until it came to power, when it belatedly perceived that its refusal to join could have powerful political consequences. In a nutshell, these were that if the Germans were in the MLF with the Americans, and the British were not, then the Germans probably would replace the British as the chief European partners of the US, even though there were also Italians, Belgians, Dutch, Greeks and Turks on board. The new British government has therefore suggested a broadened multilateral force, with strong British participation, the chief effect of which would be to dilute German influence and to restore Britain to the place of chief partner of the United States. The West Germans have been the only genuine European enthusiasts for the MLF, though they too now say there's no great hurry about it. What motivates Bonn's pro-MLF stand? It is not necessarily because the Germans long to put a finger on a nuclear trigger, though proximity to it might well feed such an appetite later on. The Germans have simply been quicker than the British to realize that eagerness to assist in a deeply cherished US project was likely to increase their political influence in an alliance that the US leads. Thus almost from the start the military significance of the nuclear navy was downgraded by almost everyone, when it was not being positively derided.

The US concept of an MLF is briefly in cold storage while the proposed British modifications are being considered by the Germans and the other Europeans. The only stubborn stand-out is France. General de Gaulle is not interested in attempting to acquire greater political influence in Europe by having a say in the shared control of a nuclear force that uses American atomic warheads. As he sees it, such a force simply means continued American political control of Europe, which he wants ended. The MLF scheme gives the US a veto on the use of the mixed-crew force, but leaves the US in sole control of America's own nuclear might. General de Gaulle does not object to a US President having that power. Apparently he does not wish to share it. But he too wants to have sole control over his own national nuclear power. He wants this because he believes that in peacetime it confers far more political power on France than sharing in a multilateral nuclear force. He is a military realist who knows the French bomb has little military importance by itself. When there was a threat of nuclear war at the time of the Cuba missiles crisis, General de Gaulle at once behaved like a loyal and even enthusiastic ally of the US, the largest nuclear power. However, when no crisis portends, as now, the General busily builds bridges to the Soviet Union and

Eastern Europe, in the form of seven-year trade credits, while simultaneously threatening the Common Market and sniping at NATO. The rule that governs his policy seems clear enough. An alliance is a useful thing in time of military danger but, when no war threatens, whatever helps French prestige is good.

Thus US fears about Europe seem misdirected. The US appears to think that its near-monopoly of the atomic bomb, among its allies, threatens to disrupt the alliance unless the allies are provided with a semblance of a share in the bomb. But what actually is affecting the alliance is that the fear of war has receded, suggesting that it is not military cement that the alliance requires. Europe today is in little danger of being attacked and in any case is now militarily strong without an MLF. If the real issues are in fact political and not military, why not face them? What the new British government seems really to be after is some new scheme of alliance that might prove acceptable to the French as well as to the Germans and to themselves, which would give the European allies as a whole an effective voice in the contingency uses of the mighty American nuclear arsenal. This is quite different from giving them a shared voice in an artificially created new multilateral force, standing apart from and completely dwarfed by American might, and in any case under a permanent US veto. Such a scheme for a new kind of alliance to fit the nuclear age may be technically unattainable, and even if attainable might be vetoed by the American Congress as well as by General de Gaulle, for inevitably it would entail a dilution of national sovereignty. But the question remains whether at this juncture an MLF, or even a revitalized NATO, is not an irrelevance.

It is not a new military machine that Europe needs, but closer economic and if possible political ties. Neither Germany nor France would stand a good chance of dominating a more closely knit Western Europe which also was open-ended toward the increasingly independent states of Eastern Europe; but then, neither would either Russian or American domination be likely. The chances of *rapprochement* between such a Europe's West and East would of course be greater if schemes for phased military disengagement were to replace plans for pouring in more military cement. And the closer that Europe managed to approach to this state of affairs, the better would be the chance of a *detente* between the US and Russia. The Soviet Union like the US is having troubles with its associates, and the new men in the Kremlin do not seem to have persuaded Eastern Europe to accept them gladly in place of Khrushchev, whose ouster has if anything increased the centrifugal forces at work. The Eastern European Communist leaders, like the Western European allies, apparently feel free to play at national politics. They ought not to be discouraged. But the Poles and Czechs,



"Why Do You Americans Stay Where You're Not Wanted?"

at least, fear any strengthening of Germany's position in Europe, and though the Russians probably have no overwhelming fear of the MLF in a military sense, it can scarcely add to their peace of mind when, according to Raymond Senter on page eight of this issue, the West already enjoys a nuclear superiority over Russia of better than five to one.

This superiority suggests that any initiatives for disengagement in Europe will have to come from the US, not from Russia. The new men in the Kremlin are too unsure of themselves, as yet, to travel beyond assurances that they still want peaceful coexistence – which the Chinese condemn them for while also bawling out the Russians for putting up with the Soviet Union's military inferiority. But even China's belligerence is probably mainly political, despite her new atomic bomb, though it could be used for political blackmail and might then provoke proliferation. If the US can only extricate itself from the Vietnam mess without too much loss of face, the task in Asia becomes mainly one of probing Chinese intentions. The Johnson Administration will find it cannot do this off in a corner in Warsaw, especially if as seems likely the Chinese soon take their place in the United Nations. Peking has frequently turned scornful thumbs down on a "two Chinas" concept, but would a China that was in the UN in fact try using force against either India or an independent Taiwan that had the US for an ally? In the balance of terror, China occupies a very inferior position. In Asia as in Europe, the real questions are – admittedly thanks mainly to American military strength – political not martial, and call for political not military maneuvers.

Fiscal Responsibility

It turns out that the Republicans didn't lose, they won – money. Officials at Republican national headquarters are reported to have said that their campaign ended with a surplus of \$1.2 million. The exact figure is debatable; some say it is only \$500,000. Nevertheless the Committee is in the black; the Grand Old Party, in Dean Burch's words, is on a "solid financial foundation." In the midst of the Great Crash of reputations and careers, Mr. Burch kept his wallet zippered. What other large enterprise can one name that has managed to prosper and go bankrupt simultaneously?

By bankrupt, it is not meant that the Republican Party has gone out of business – only that its volume has shrunk so much and so quickly. While Mr. Burch was guarding the cash, his company lost 38 seats in the House of Representatives and three in the Senate. It lost all but about 10 percent of the Negro vote. It lost more than 485 seats in state legislatures, giving Democrats control of both houses of the legislature in Iowa,

Maine, Indiana, Utah, Michigan, New York and Colorado, and assuring Democratic majorities in both houses in 26 other states. It lost the Illinois House of Representatives. In Texas, it lost five out of six GOP state legislators, in Florida, six out of 18. In seven Southern states which held legislative elections (Goldwater country) the GOP scored a net loss of two state legislators.

But the surplus is there, thanks to fiscal responsibility. The only deficit is in votes.

Military Rule in Bolivia

The military take-over in Bolivia is especially unfortunate because for some time Bolivia, along with Costa Rica and Mexico, had seemed to show militarism can be contained in Latin America. In 1952 the regular army was disbanded and in its place there grew up peasant leagues of armed Quechua-speaking Indians, who led the way for the incorporation of the Indians into the political life of the country for the first time. After much debate the revolutionary party, MNR, decided to rebuild a new army which would be kept small and be a servant of the party. Entrance to the officer corps was restricted to MNR supporters and workers' sons.

Continued civilian control of Bolivia was predicated on the unity of the MNR, which was a broad revolutionary front. The greatest strain on its unity was the problem of enforcing priorities of development and, of course, the problem of Presidential succession. By 1960 both the right and left wings of the party were fighting for the Presidency. When Paz Estenssoro won nomination for a second time, the leader of the right, Wálter Guevara Arce, led his followers out of the MNR. The loyalty of the left was retained when Juan Lechín, leader of the tin miners, was given the Vice Presidency.

But with the miners behind Lechín and the peasants in the country armed, as they had been ever since 1952, the balance of power was precarious, and so President Paz Estenssoro turned back to the army as a counterweight. Perhaps he saw no alternative – but as it turned out, the President himself was the victim of his own strategy. The years from 1960 to 1963 saw the army's budget allocation double. This year, Paz Estenssoro obviously felt strong enough to ram through a constitutional amendment that allowed him to succeed himself. Juan Lechín, seeing his own Presidential hopes blocked, then led the left out of the MNR.

Books are still coming off the academic presses praising the apolitical role of the Bolivian military. Yet as early as February of this year, four months before the Presidential election, the chief of the Air Force, General René Barrientos, had made a bid for the Vice Presidency. At first, Paz Estenssoro passed him over, and in March the General narrowly missed being assassinated

in mysterious circumstances. The military then forced President Paz to accept Barrientos as his running-mate. Thereupon, ex-President Siles and many sections of the MNR boycotted the election. The President discovered that his revolutionary front now consisted only of his personal followers in MNR, the army and some of the armed peasants who had gained land during the revolution. The task of regaining control over the tin mines, so essential to Bolivia's economy, and of instituting necessary reforms meant greater and greater dependence on the military. The attempt by Paz Estenssoro to put the Bolivian revolution on a financial footing that would free him from the necessity of receiving almost 50 percent of his budget from the US brought increased violence and protest from students, teachers and miners.

To move into the austerity stage of an economic development program just at the time when his support was weakest proved fatal to Paz Estenssoro. Thus, when General Barrientos withdrew from the capital to his home in Cochabamba, denouncing the President, expressing sympathy with the miners and appealing to the Indian peasant leagues, the last hopes for unity disappeared. The military, originally created as a tool for the revolution, came to control it.

The US has had a part in all this. US military aid to Latin America is now more, not less, than before the Alliance. Over 75 percent of the military aid to Bolivia from the US since 1952 has been given in the last three years and seems to have resulted only in the political stiffening of the army. General Barrientos, who overthrew the elected President, is a US-trained pilot whose US flight instructor is now in La Paz as an attaché.

Changes Are Coming In Israeli Politics

From a correspondent in Tel Aviv

General Moshe Dayan's resignation from Mr. Eshkol's cabinet came as no surprise, though the timing was a bit unexpected. Ever since Ben-Gurion left the Israeli premiership 18 months ago, Dayan's position in the cabinet has been rather precarious. Though he generally disagreed with most of Eshkol's political moves, Eshkol asked him to stay in the government, probably feeling that having him inside is safer than giving him free rein if he's out. Dayan felt that he should be entitled by his military past to the post of Defense Minister, but Eshkol kept this vital department to himself and Dayan had to remain satisfied with the subordinate position of Minister of Agriculture which he held under Ben-Gurion.

Politically Dayan is an enigma. He is rather estranged from the Mapai machine which sees him as a

potential threat to its power but has to use him for his electoral appeal. The intellectuals have some grave doubts about the sincerity of his commitment to the democratic process, and even his admirers sometimes admit that he may be rash and irresponsible. But he has Ben-Gurion's blessing coupled with his own personal political appeal: his no-nonsense, straightforward and military attitude, coupled with a strong charismatic personality, have made him popular with the less politically sophisticated.

Eshkol and the Mapai establishment did much to block his way to the top, and the recent proposed merger between Mapai and *Ahdut Haavoda* Party (a left-wing party, slightly more radical socially than Mapai itself) was in a way aimed at bringing an alternative leadership to Dayan to the front. Such a political merger, which would have taken some of the unnecessary venom out of Israeli party politics, was fiercely opposed by Ben-Gurion who is constantly harassing the government from his back seat. Its success would have boosted Eshkol's image tremendously.

So Dayan chose his time with military precision: on one hand the Mapai-*Ahdut Haavoda* merger was almost decided upon; on the other hand Mapai is internally split over the reinstatement of the ex-secretary of the Histadruth, Lavon, the only man who openly dared to defy Ben-Gurion and still pays for it by being kept by the Mapai machine in the political wilderness. By quitting the cabinet at this moment, Dayan signifies that he is out to consolidate an alternative to Eshkol's leadership. With Dayan only 50 years old and Eshkol 69, there is little chance of ultimately stopping Dayan unless all the other rivalries are forgotten, and this is unlikely to happen.

On the day he left the cabinet, Dayan addressed a Mapai meeting in Zahala, the Tel Aviv suburb where he lives. Zahala was originally an army officers' housing estate, so most of the local people share Dayan's military background. It is fair to assume that he was more outspoken in his own backyard than he may choose to be in less friendly territory. He impeached Eshkol's government for the following reasons:

Eshkol is too soft on the Arabs; the Arab menace should not be underrated, and conciliatory moods are out of place.

Israel has to look for friends where she may find them, and consequently Israel should not be hindered from fully developing her relations with Western Germany. This sounds a familiar Ben-Gurion note: BG once called "racialists" some politicians who said that German friendship should be regarded with caution.

Mapai should be less dependent on the labor vote and on organized trade union pressure. Wages should be kept down, pecuniary incentives should replace social considerations.

Consequently, the proposed merger with *Ahdut Haavoda*, which would mean that Mapai is moving more to the left, should be called off under the present circumstances.

The process of "de-Bengurionization" undertaken by Eshkol should be stopped, especially as far as Lavon is concerned.

The realignment of Israeli politics in the post-Bengurion era is on its way.

British Experiment in Art for the Masses

Four years ago a young British playwright, Arnold Wesker, began to campaign to bring free theater, music and art of high quality to all English workingmen. Now 32, Wesker has made remarkable progress, and his project promises to be, at the least, an instructive experiment in mass culture.

Wesker's scheme has the support of Sir Laurence Olivier, Henry Moore, Benjamin Britten and J. B. Priestley. More important to Wesker, who regards his group as mainly proletarian, is the implicit endorsement of the powerful Trades Union Congress. Wesker named his organization "Center 42," after the TUC's Resolution Number 42 calling for "greater participation by the trade union movement in all cultural activities."

Center 42 has staged six festivals in provincial towns where nearly a third of every audience had never before seen live performances of this kind. The one-week festivals offered folk singing, jazz, Stravinsky's *Soldier's Tale*, a musical drama about Ludites, the National Youth Theater's production of *Hamlet*, a new play by Bernard Kops, visual arts displays, and Charles Parker's *The Maker and the Tool*, a theater-film documentary based on recorded interviews which Parker had with workers about their jobs.

Attendance was not very good in some towns, and not all events were free, though none cost more than 90 cents. Financial support had to come from private sources and the unions – not from the government, as Wesker hopes it will ultimately. The workers did not always take well to poetry reading in their factories or folk singing in their pubs. But on the whole, the festivals were acclaimed. This summer Center 42 was given an old Victorian roundhouse at Chalk Farm in central London to be its permanent headquarters. Many people still doubt that Wesker will realize his goal of "free art for all" but few any longer doubt that he will succeed in his more limited aim of "changing the habits of presenting the arts."

Center 42 is an alternative to commercially produced

culture, and is supposed to provide a pool of talent from which communities can draw for their festivals. Until the government can be persuaded to take over the responsibility, Center 42 will finance the festivals as well.

Wesker is not merely asking for increased government subsidies to the arts. If that were his only aim, his project would not be very novel. The British government, via the Arts Council, annually spends nearly \$8.5 million on culture. Other European countries, notably West Germany, spend far more. But Wesker does not want the arts to be subsidized; he hopes to make support of the arts a government *responsibility*, like support of education and health.

Wesker's project deserves the attention of liberals on this side of the Atlantic who want the government to enlarge individual liberty by challenging the dominance of commercially produced culture. Wesker addresses a similar point to English workingmen: "How can you allow yourselves to be cretinized by bad films, bad TV and bad architecture? You will not tolerate bad working conditions, why should you tolerate bad thinking and feeling conditions?"

Difficulties arise. The essence of liberty, in the Anglo-American tradition of liberalism, consists in an individual's ability to do what he pleases so long as he does not interfere with others' legitimate interests. In this sense, having bad taste does not restrict one's liberty in the way that having bad health does. It may very well be, as many have argued, that by offering better quality culture as an alternative to *kitsch*, the government could help individuals to live fuller lives. But to call that an increase in liberty would be to obscure the distinction, vital to liberalism, between doing as you please and doing as someone else thinks you ought (whether or not it is for your own good). Liberal doctrine has traditionally regarded interference with activities of the mind – with what adults think and feel – as an evil of the worst sort. It therefore seems

COMING: *Malcolm Moos*
on the Republican Party
—problems and prospects
of reorganization

a mistake to appeal to government action to improve the standards of public taste.

In this country, discussions of mass culture give too little consideration to the fact that encouraging the public to accept an *elite's* standards of taste is *prima facie* illiberal. Consider, for instance, Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s easy acceptance of the view that the "object of the institution of civil government" is the "moral, political and intellectual improvement" of the condition of its citizens. If the liberal must choose one slogan to characterize the many objects of government, he would surely do better to pick "giving the people what they want" than "improving the condition of the people."

There is an argument which appears to offer an escape from the dilemma of the liberal who wishes to improve mass tastes. Unless the public is exposed to all kinds of culture, including what the *elite* consider good, no one can say for sure whether the public is really getting what it wants. Until the government becomes involved in providing culture, the institutional framework in which culture is produced is biased in favor of *kitsch* simply because that is what is most profitable.

Some form of this argument has often been used in liberal circles in the US, where Gilbert Seldes was one of its earliest expositors, and in Britain where Richard

Hoggart managed to get it into a government-sponsored report on commercial television. It is evidently assumed that the government would promote the culture favored by an *elite*. How can the government be justified in encouraging the public to adopt standards of taste which an *elite* happens to think are best?

Wesker believes that although at present only a minority thinks that an improvement in the standards of public culture is desirable, the majority will agree once the minority has shown them how much more enjoyable good art can be. What if the public turns out to prefer *kitsch* to quality culture, even when the latter is free? Would Center 42's supporters give up their program of cultural improvement, or would they give up their principles of liberty? This is a dilemma which many liberals will have to face sooner or later.

It has been observed that as Western society progressively realizes the goals for which liberals have long fought – more leisure, better education, higher wages – the individuals for whom these gains are won use them for purposes which liberal intellectuals find repugnant. Still, few are willing to accept Stuart Hughes' pessimistic proposition that the price of political democracy is cultural democracy and, inevitably, debased standards of taste. It should be interesting to watch Center 42, to test the hypothesis that the public really wants quality culture.

DENNIS THOMPSON

Khrushchev, the Generals and Goldwater

by Raymond D. Senter

In speculating last week in these pages on the reasons for Khrushchev's downfall, Zbigniew Brzezinski seems to me to have overlooked or downgraded two elements: Khrushchev's disagreements with the Soviet generals aggravated by growing US military superiority; and Barry Goldwater's candidacy.

One of the first public indications of a diverging viewpoint between the deposed Premier and the military came as early as November 8, 1956. At a Kremlin press conference Khrushchev said: "I do not trust the appraisal of generals on questions of strategic importance." Two months later, in a report to the Supreme Soviet, Khrushchev said that long-range ballistic missiles – a field in which the Soviets *then* enjoyed a lead over the US – would be the dominant weapons of the future and that conventional arms, including

manned bombers, were obsolescent. He therefore proposed and put through a drastic one-third cut in the size of the Soviet armed forces.

When Defense Minister Marshal Malinovski followed Khrushchev to the platform, he tempered his support of the Premier's position with a warning against putting too much reliance on long-range missiles. The same argument would later be echoed in the US by Senator Goldwater, and by Air Force Chief of Staff General Curtis LeMay and other military men.

During the next two years, 1960-61, there were growing public indications of the split in Soviet strategic thinking, documented in the introduction to the translation of the Russian book *Soviet Military Strategy* published here in 1963. The introduction was written by three American experts in Soviet military affairs

employed at the USAF's "think factory," Rand Corporation: Herbert S. Dinerstein, Leon Gouré and Thomas W. Wolfe. "Whereas Khrushchev suggested that the West would not dare to attack the Soviet Union except as the *irrational* action of a Western 'Madman' [*italics added*], Malinovski now stressed . . . that the West was making serious preparations for a surprise nuclear attack," these Rand authors wrote.

Malinovski could find evidence for his contention. American production skills and capacity had already begun to overtake the Soviet Union in the production of ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles), and American U-2 reconnaissance flights over the USSR had provided photographic evidence that the Russians were not exploiting their initial lead. Thus the Russians were being stripped of their "missile rattling" deterrent which had served so well during the Suez crisis in 1956.

This could explain why Khrushchev broke the nuclear test moratorium during the summer of 1961 and later exploded a 60-megaton terror weapon while boasting of an even larger one in the 100-megaton range. By this means the Soviets might hope to deter the US from attacking Russia now that the US had the upper hand in the ICBM race. Columnist Drew Pearson, who interviewed Khrushchev during the Berlin crisis in the summer of 1961, reported that the Soviet leader said then that his "generals were pressuring him to renew nuclear testing."

The American response to the Berlin crisis and the renewed Soviet nuclear tests was to program further expansion of ICBM and submarine-launched Polaris missile production which, together with the US fleet of some 2,000 strategic bombers, probably outnumbered Soviet strategic weapons, in the inventory and planned, by a factor of five to one or more. From the US viewpoint, such large quantities were needed to assure the survival of an adequate retaliatory force, assuming the Russians hit first. But if the Soviets had no first-strike intentions, then our fast-growing arsenal could have had ominous overtones to them.

Because the Soviets could not quickly step up their ICBM production, they took a page from the US book. In the late 1950's, lagging in the ICBM race, the US had hurriedly turned out easier-to-build, medium-range missiles and installed them within range of the USSR—in Britain, Italy and Turkey. Cuba presented just such an opportunity for the Russians. There is reason to suspect that the idea of putting missiles in Cuba originated with the Soviet military and that Khrushchev gave his approval somewhat reluctantly.

If the Cuban venture did indeed originate with the military, Khrushchev must subsequently have berated them harshly and used the opportunity to reassert his own strategic concepts and to downgrade those of the

military. Perhaps he even pointed out that if the US did plan to attack the USSR, it had every provocation during the Cuban crisis, and an overwhelming superiority in bombers and missiles to accomplish this objective.

There is every indication that having come "eyeball to eyeball" with thermonuclear warfare in the fall of 1962, Khrushchev saw more clearly than ever before that a nuclear stalemate did indeed exist; and that, furthermore, despite Russia's smaller inventory of bombers and missiles, it was adequate to deter the US. Why, then, he might well ask, should the Soviet divert resources from badly needed consumer and capital goods for a major expansion of its military forces?

In January of 1963, speaking to the East German Communist Party Congress, the Soviet Premier replied to Chinese Communist taunts that he had run from a "paper tiger." He noted that the US had some 40,000 nuclear weapons and estimated that a nuclear exchange between the two countries would probably leave nearly 800 million casualties.

But despite what appeared to Khrushchev to be an effective nuclear stalemate in January of 1963, a month later and again in early 1964 the US Defense Department sought and obtained approval for additional hundreds of ICBMs which would bring the US inventory of land- and submarine-based missiles to nearly 2,000 later in this decade. It would be surprising if the Soviet military did not use this as an excuse to seek a major expansion of the Soviet missile forces. Might they not have argued that if the US should strike first, it could easily wipe out the several hundred Russian missiles and their bomber fleet, leaving hundreds of unused missiles which could be used to blackmail the USSR to its knees? But Khrushchev, embarrassed by the need to buy wheat from the West, was anxious to build new fertilizer factories and expand chicken production.

Then there was Goldwater's nomination, which surely gave some support for the arguments of the Soviet military and Communist Party hard-liners. If Khrushchev remonstrated that the Arizona Senator had slight chance of being elected, his opponents might reply: "But what about the next time? Is there only one such irrational leader in US politics?"

Late in August came Goldwater's charge of a "Megatonnage Gap," forcing Defense Secretary McNamara to reply with facts and figures which publicly reminded the world of the great preponderance of US strategic power. While the US was boasting of its large margin of strategic weapons, Khrushchev on October 2 reportedly again said "the defense of the [USSR] is at the proper level." Less than a month later his successors were announcing that the Soviet government "has taken and will take measures to strengthen the country's defense capability."

FBI Agent as Missionary

by William Bradford Huie

Jackson, Mississippi

As the weeks pass, more and more of us must confront the fact that the murderers of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner are never going to be punished in any manner, even though I know, and the FBI knows, who the murderers are. This is not the fault of federal agents. The FBI, in fact, has damaged those murderers psychologically, caused them to lose status and face, by purchasing the bodies of the civil rights workers from one or more of the murderers. At least this has shown to the "good people of Mississippi" that the "patriots" and "minutemen" of Neshoba County are also capable of doublecrossing one another for money.

But the FBI cannot punish. Only the people of Mississippi can punish. And people who have just voted 7-to-1 for Goldwater, for no other reason than to express their contempt for the civil rights bill, are not going to punish their "patriots" in 1964, or even in 1965.

Some day, yes. Because change is coming even in Mississippi. But equal opportunity for Negroes, and equal justice for "agitators," must wait on the slow and skillful efforts of many men, including Special Agent Roy K. Moore, in charge of the new branch office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation here. The new office looks big, busy, ultra-modern and permanent. It occupies the entire top floor of a new bank building at State and Capitol Streets. The Mississippi press, with resignation, has concluded: "If we must be occupied by the central government, at least the FBI office is profitable. It's equal to our getting a new industry with a \$4-million-a-year payroll."

After I had been escorted down the corridors and shown the many rooms and facilities by Special Agent Moore, I remarked: "The first federal occupation of Mississippi lasted only 11 years. Apparently this second occupation is planned to last much longer."

Mr. Moore smiled. A personable, articulate man just turned 50, he smiles readily. This is why he is here. He was carefully chosen by John Edgar Hoover and the Justice Department to become the first resident ambassador from Washington to "the sovereign state of Mississippi." He is here to do a long-range selling job . . . to sell the state's "good people" on the propo-

sition that a crime is still a crime even when committed against an "agitator" . . . that when a civil rights worker is murdered it's the murderer who is guilty, not the victim . . . that when a church is burned it is the arsonists who should be arrested, not the church members . . . and that when a home is dynamited it is the dynamiters who should be punished, not the injured who are in the hospital.

Working at this assignment, Mr. Moore has become the state's busiest luncheon, after-dinner and convention speaker. Moreover, when he is not on a dais he works at being a host. I'm not the only reporter to whom he has shown his new offices: he broadcasts invitations to Mississippi publishers, editors, reporters, preachers, businessmen, sheriffs and legislators. In every speech and to every visitor he suggests that Mississippi's "great progress" and "splendid future" should not be jeopardized by "unchecked violence."

Such activity by an FBI agent – the detective turned missionary – may be surprising, even irritating, to some Americans. Instead of addressing Rotarians, why isn't he out dragging rivers for bodies or capturing murderers? The answer is that the speeches and salesmanship are necessary if violent reaction to racial change in Mississippi is ever to be halted.

The Justice Department, particularly the FBI, has been criticized for not "doing more" in Mississippi. By "doing more" the critics mean *punishment*. Why haven't the murderers, arsonists and dynamiters been "brought to justice" . . . sent to gas chambers and prisons? The Rev. Martin Luther King has contributed to this criticism by saying that since the FBI can reassemble a dynamited airplane and convict the dynamiters, why can't it similarly punish murderers and dynamiters in Mississippi?

The answer is: investigation has its limitations. So does prosecution. The FBI has no power to punish. It can reassemble the dynamited aircraft and arrest the dynamiter. Justice Department lawyers can present the evidence to a grand jury. But at that point investigation and prosecution reach their limit. Punishment can come only if the majority of 18 citizens of Mississippi, forming a grand jury, decide to indict; and thereafter, only if 12 citizens of Mississippi, forming a petit jury, and partially chosen by the defendants, *unanimously* decide to punish!

Despite all the charges of mushrooming federal

WILLIAM BRADFORD HUIE is currently writing a book, *Three Lives for Mississippi*, to be published by Whitney Communications Corporation in April.

power in the United States, no federal agency today has the power to punish a Ku Klux murderer, arsonist or dynamiter in Mississippi. In either a state or a federal court the power to punish rests solely in the hands of the "good people" of a "sovereign state." This is why the FBI must work with the state law enforcement agencies, and why punishment must wait upon salesmanship.

The root of the problem here is public approval of the "patriots" who have been "provoked" into violence against the "dirty, bearded, beatnik, Red, Jew, nigger-loving, agitating invaders." So Mr. Moore's first task is to alter the image of the "patriots": to cause them to lose face and status. From every rostrum and through every reporter he tries to demonstrate that the murderers and dynamiters are not "patriots" from "fine families" but are common criminals.

In this task he was fortunate when, on arresting some of the arsonists and dynamiters in the McComb area, he found loot which indicated they were also bank robbers.

Bank robbing is not on the approved crime list here: it is an activity which can result in one's being expelled from the Citizens Council. So Mr. Moore pushed his luck. He photographed the robber-patriots with their loot, and exploited his new local press contacts to place the pictures on Page One. These pictures compelled some of the "good people" to reflect on a question: If two of the dynamiters were also bank robbers, might not all the other "violent patriots" be no better than bank robbers?

It was good psychological warfare, and it enabled the FBI and the Justice Department lawyers to achieve what they consider their first success in Mississippi courts. Faced with the adverse "bank robber" publicity, nine of the McComb defendants decided to plead guilty in return for *suspended* sentences of up to 15 years. The state judge suspended the sentences, he said, because the dynamiters had been "unduly provoked" by the civil rights agitators.

This "success" was not applauded by Northern newspapers. The *New York Times* derided it because the defendants went free. But what the editorialists should have pointed out is that these defendants were certain to go free in any case. There was no chance of punishing them with anything as severe as imprisonment. The Justice Department representatives had this choice: they could try to persuade the nine to plead guilty in return for a suspended sentence, or they could let the nine plead not guilty before a jury and be promptly acquitted. It was a Hobson's choice, but the guilty pleas were "good" for the cause of law and order. They were a beginning. The "patriots" lost face: at least they must now live on probation, forbidden to carry guns and dynamite.

Wanted: A Modern House

(Continued from front cover)

45 more Representatives than in the last Congress, is the time for some preventive medicine on Capitol Hill. With this in view, the liberal Democratic Study Group in the House is discussing what innovations it will urge on Speaker McCormack this January, to make sure that essential legislation gets through the House labyrinth and to the members for vote. To defer streamlining of its antiquated procedures, the Study Group understands, is to risk the same old obstructionism by autocratic, small-minded committee chairmen.

What a modern House of Representatives needs, above all, is greater party responsibility. "If the Constitutional government of the country be compared to a vast machine set up in a factory to be worked by electric power," Lord Bryce wrote, "the party system may be likened to the dynamo engine that makes the electric current which, when turned on, sets all the machinery in motion." And it is party loyalty (which is not the same as regimented uniformity) that enables the party machinery to function. As a first order of business, therefore, the new majority in the House, sitting in caucus, should agree that any colleague who repudiated his party in November has cut himself loose from the caucus. No Representative who openly endorsed the candidacy of Barry Goldwater should be given any committee assignment as a Democrat. By so deciding, the caucus would simply be ratifying a prior decision by the defecting Democrats themselves. The groundwork for such action was laid in the last days of the 88th Congress, when the leader of the Democratic Study Group, Representative John A. Blatnik of Minnesota, served notice of his group's "firm intention to oppose the seating in the January, 1965, Democratic caucus of any present member or candidate . . . who supported, campaigned for or otherwise advocated the election of a President or Vice President other than the candidates duly nominated by the Democratic Party." A copy of that statement was mailed to every Democratic candidate for the House. Since then, the staff of the Democratic Study Group has been clipping newspaper stories describing the formal support given the Goldwater-Miller ticket by Representatives John Bell Williams of Mississippi and Albert W. Watson of South Carolina. These two, it appears, are the only clearly proven cases.

The precedent for a party moving against its renegades is weak, but it is there. The House saw fit to discipline for desertion in 1925, when Speaker Nicholas Longworth took away the important committee posts

of 13 Wisconsin Republicans who supported Robert La Follette for President on the Progressive ticket. In 1949, some angry talk hinted at reprisals against Democratic Congressmen in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina, who campaigned for the States' Rights Party. But Democratic defections that year were so huge that any action against the bolters might have endangered the party's control of Congress. In January, 1965, the circumstances will be quite different.

Denying membership in the Democratic caucus to Williams and Watson is important not because two votes matter (they would be cast against any faintly controversial LBJ proposals, regardless), but because it would alert all Democratic legislators that they may not in the future be permitted to hold the hand they bite. Ironically, Williams and Watson might welcome their exclusion from the Democratic fraternity. They then could more easily do what comes natural – follow Senator Thurmond and wed the party whose mistress they have long been. As a Republican, Watson might run for the Senate seat of Olin D. Johnston in 1968; as a Republican, Williams might run for governor of Mississippi in 1967; and both could win. But if reactionary racist politics is what a part of the South wants, it has every right to have it – properly labeled.

Freeing the Majority

The disciplining of Williams and Watson is only the beginning. If the legislative product of the 89th Congress is to truly reflect the will of its members, House committees – Rules in particular – must become more responsive to the majority. No one is about to propose that free-and-full debate be curtailed – only that minorities be prevented from frustrating majorities. There are several methods by which House committees can be made more efficient and responsible, any one of which is preferable to the present system. For example, instead of being self-perpetuating, committee chairmen or the ranking majority member of a committee could be appointed by the Speaker, with the approval of the Democratic caucus, or, the caucus itself could nominate heads of committees, the Speaker assenting; or, the majority members of holdover committees could nominate their successors, with the approval of the entire caucus, or merely the Speaker, or both. But in any election of committee chairmen, by the caucus or by members of holdover committees, balloting should be secret. The objective, whatever the means, is to assure that all committee chairmen will be accountable to and representative of the majority of Democratic members, ending this intolerable autocracy by which one man, as chairman of a committee, can dictate to the whole House, simply because he has been around so long.

Technically the Rules Committee is supposed not to

block legislation but to regulate the flow of legislative traffic. It would be more likely to perform that function were the Speaker to take over the chairmanship of Rules himself. Alternately, the Speaker could be authorized by the Democratic caucus to appoint all majority members to Rules, with caucus approval. The House could further protect itself from obstructionism by giving either the chairman of any standing committee or the ranking majority member of any committee who favors a given piece of legislation the right to call for a red or green light on that legislation from the Rules Committee, after 21 days have elapsed. If Rules chose to keep a bill bottled up, the House after the 21 days could then uncork the bottle, debate the released bill and vote on it. It would be useful too were the Democratic caucus to agree that henceforth a third or so of the House could, by signing a discharge petition, force any pending bill to the floor.

Aside from such procedural streamlining, the Democratic caucus is bound to consider how best to employ the large number of its members who are issue-oriented, who are not cattle to be corralled and counted, who came to Congress because they want to help legislate. Taking account of these yearnings, perhaps the caucus will consider enlarging the Democratic Steering Committee, with members elected from each section of the country through regional caucuses. A broadened Steering Committee would not only provide a forum for policy discussions, but could act as a supplementary whip to keep the majority of Representatives in line with their party's program.

Congressman Richard Bolling, whose comments appear in these pages, would go one step further. He believes that the public would get better service from the House if it knew what outside jobs Congressmen hold and what outside income they are receiving. He proposes that Representatives, or any employee of the House who receives an annual salary of \$21,500 or more, should file yearly with the clerk of the House a public report disclosing the amount and source of all income and gifts received by him or a member of his family during the year that total more than \$100. Bolling believes a Congressman's assets, as well as assets entrusted to him or by him, should be made public.

It has become fashionable to demean the legislative branch and to say that only Presidential initiative and authority can move us forward. Yet great projects have been inspired and led to fruition in the Congress – TVA, the Wagner Act, the Peace Corps come to mind. But if it is to play a constructive role the House – and right now that means the Democratic majority – must first so organize its affairs that necessary public business can be transacted. If the House falters this coming session, full blame will rest with the Democratic leadership. It's their ball game.

THE EDITORS

It's Up to the Democrats

A Congressman's View of the Problem

In the 16 years that I have been a member of Congress, the House has revealed itself to me as ineffective as a coordinate branch of the federal government, negative in its approach to national tasks, generally unresponsive to any but parochial economic interests. Its procedures, time-consuming and unwieldy, mask anonymous centers of irresponsible power. Its legislation is often a travesty of what the national welfare requires. None of these defects are, given the present House division, beyond repair. But if they are to be repaired, the House must act promptly and decisively.

In the 87th Congress, which met after the inauguration of President Kennedy, 20,316 measures – bills and resolutions – were introduced; about 12 percent of them passed both House and Senate. At the time of President Kennedy's assassination, November 22, 1963, his legislative program, then 11 months old, was in wretched shape, most of it stalled in committee where it was deliberately held by the committee barons. In a similar period, the British Prime Minister could have had his entire legislative program passed by the House of Commons. It is doubtful that a chief of government in any country but the United States can be denied a decision on major legislation by a national legislature.

For 28 out of the past 32 years, the House has been controlled by Democrats. During this period it has been more conservative than any President, even a Republican one, and more conservative than the Senate. Why? In large part because the majority of House Democrats has not had effective control of the House. Even the Democrats' own party-whip system is symptomatic of the unrepresentative nature of the House. Party whips – the members responsible for organizing voting on the House floor – are selected from 18 geographical areas of the country and are supposed to represent fairly the broad interests of the voters of these zones. But the zones are not based at present on any formula of equal representation by state, region or population. Some zones consist of several states, others of only one state. If we examine the populations of these zones, we find that each of the whip zones in the South has an average of 7.7 million inhabitants, while each zone in the West has an average of 13.3 million. The Democrats alone have the means to correct such basic inequity in representation.

Unlike the Democrats, House Republican leaders

make certain that their party's seats on the powerful committees are filled by members who reflect their party's conservative views. With one possible exception, there are no Republican liberals on the three most powerful committees – Appropriations, Rules, and Ways and Means. The John Lindsays of the GOP are given lesser committee assignments.

The Democratic members of the House are, for the most part, moderate to progressive in their outlook. Nevertheless this majority of Democrats accepts without argument the myth of the inviolability of seniority, permitting conservative Democrats, a numerical minority, to retain many of the most powerful committee positions and thus to subvert the objectives of the Democratic Party as a whole.

It is, of course, gratifying to the Republicans to see the Democrats put conservative foxes in charge of liberal chicken coops, appointing to high committee posts members who reflect Republican rather than Democratic views on great national issues.

The history of the House and the development of its present power structure suggests ways of accomplishing some necessary reforms. Few liberal Democrats seem aware that the cast-iron seniority system is a comparatively new development; until 1911 the Speaker had the power to appoint chairmen and members of all the committees. Liberal Democrats also overlook the fact that the power of their appointive Committee on Committees (the Democratic members of Ways and Means) to fill committee vacancies is a power delegated by the whole caucus of Democratic members of the House.

For Party Discipline

Thus, the place to reform the procedures of the House is not in study commissions or on the floor, but in the Democratic caucus. It is here that methods could be adopted by a majority of House Democrats to assure an assignment of committee seats that will reflect the liberal views of the majority. The three immediate tasks of the majority are: to enhance the authority of the Speaker; to make sure that Democratic membership on legislative committees is representative; and to increase the individual responsibility of each Democrat toward his leaders.

The House has functioned effectively, aside from times of national emergency, only when there has been general agreement on policy objectives and on the avenues to achieve them. And this has come about when two conditions existed: (a) when the majority party functioned through its caucus, as in the time of Clay and in the time of Speaker Champ Clark and Oscar W. Underwood, his Majority Leader, from 1913 to 1916; (b) when the Speakership was held by strong

and aggressive men such as Reed and Cannon.

Now it is true that the power of the Speakership prior to 1911 was an autocratic and coercive one which few members would defy if they wished to hold onto their committee seats or their privileges. But a modification of this former grant of power could be put into effect today. To bring this about, each Democratic Representative would have to bear an increased accountability to his party.

The titular Democratic leader of the House, the Speaker, should become the actual operating head of the party's legislative apparatus. His power would be observable and he would be held accountable not only to his party colleagues but also the voting public.

The party leader's exclusive power to nominate members of two key committees—Ways and Means and Rules—as well as to nominate the top party member on every committee would constitute a potent threat to defiant members. The party leader would become the leader of a legislative team which would produce a coherent and coordinated legislative program. His ability to veto or to replace a man completely out of step with his party viewpoint would nevertheless be subject to ratification by the majority of the members of his party. It would place final legislative responsibility where it belongs—on the majority of the Democratic Party. It would modify, but not eliminate, the seniority rule. Seniority, no doubt, would remain as the method of selecting the great majority of committee members. This was the case even during the rule of Speaker Cannon. However, the implied threat of party discipline would give pause to a number of members.

There is no design to achieve the kind of party discipline that has prevailed at certain times in the British House of Commons. The United States is too large and diverse and our political parties too inclusive to justify a demand for such adherence. However, there is every reason why the majority of the majority should have its major proposals voted on by the whole House without undue delay, much less without deliberate dilatory tactics that prevent a vote on a major issue from ever occurring.

The failure of the House is the failure of the Democratic Party of which I am a member. Its responsibility cannot be evaded much longer without reducing the national assembly to impotence, which would mean a vital failure in the democratic process itself.

RICHARD BOLLING

REPRESENTATIVE BOLLING (*D, Missouri*) has just been re-elected to his ninth term in the House of Representatives. He is a member of the powerful Rules Committee, the Democratic Study Group, and is the author of *House Out of Order* to be published next February by E. P. Dutton from which this article has been adapted.

From the White House Side

Lyndon Johnson's Stake in Reform

The success or failure of the movement for Congressional reform in the 89th Congress hinges critically on President Johnson's legislative strategy. As long as the President sticks to his legislative program and avoids challenging Congress' encrusted work habits or its jerry-built structure of personal power, prestige and privilege, his policy proposals are likely to receive prompt and favorable attention. If the President, alternatively, tries to pressure or persuade Congress to reform its ways as well as to pass his legislation, he is likely to alienate much of the support that he needs for his substantive programs.

What then should President Johnson's strategy be? In my opinion, the President should adopt a strategy of reform. Conditions are now ripe for a basic procedural, organizational and political transformation of Congress, if the President chooses to join forces with those operating in both houses to effect a modernization of the legislature. At a minimum the President can induce Congress to examine itself along the lines suggested in a resolution introduced by 31 Senators in the 88th Congress which, had it been passed, would have established a Joint Committee on the Organization of the Congress "to make a full and complete study of the organization and operations of Congress."

The principal, though certainly not the exclusive, source of inertia in the government today lies in the frustration of majority rule in both houses of Congress. This frustration is largely a function of Congress' archaic procedures and organization. As they are presently constituted, Senate Rule 22 and the seniority system are still the dominant obstacles to effective majority operation of both houses. The separation of the House Rules Committee from responsibility to the majority party of the lower chamber also contributes to minority rule. These elements of Congressional operations, in conjunction with a host of other, lesser-known practices, such as the Senate rule that forbids committees to meet when the full chamber is in session, hinder and even preclude Congress from action on important legislation, particularly legislation proposed by the President. First of all, consideration of legislation by the Congress is often blocked by the action of a committee. The classic case is the refusal of the House Rules Committee in 1960 to permit a conference committee to be held on an aid to education bill,

although the bill had already been passed in slightly different versions by majorities in both houses. President Kennedy's medicare proposal still languishes before the House Ways and Means Committee. Extensive hearings have been held on the bill. Majorities exist in both houses to pass the legislation. The intransigence of Chairman Wilbur Mills has up to now kept the bill buried in committee.

For over a decade a tacit agreement between Rep. Clarence Cannon, former chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and Rep. Otto Passman, chairman of the House Foreign Aid Appropriations Subcommittee, prevented the full Appropriations Committee from passing, in effect, on its subcommittee's annual massive cut in aid funds. Nothing less than Cannon's death and the ascendancy of Rep. George Mahon to the chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee proved sufficient to break Passman's predatory hold on the aid measure. For the first time in over 10 years, Passman's recommended slash in aid funds — \$500 million for fiscal year 1965 — was rejected.

Lyndon Johnson must cope with these facts of legislative life. No President can be indifferent to Congressional exercise of power and still fulfill the duties of his office. Nor can the organization, procedures and party mechanisms of Congress be ignored, especially insofar as they block the settlement of pressing national issues and sap the vigor and resolution of a government dependent on majority rule.

The Long-Range Challenge

The development of a manipulable Congress is not the issue; nor is simply President Johnson's program before the 89th Congress. At issue is the vitality of Congress itself as an instrument of popular rule. President Johnson can spend his November mandate in prodding Congress to pass his specific legislative proposals. Their enactment, while a distinct tribute to Johnson's legislative talents, would still constitute a short-run success. The long-range challenge of forging a modern legislature that, beyond Johnson, can act quickly on a President's recommendations; that can thoroughly explore them to inform itself and the nation; that can propose salutary alternatives to them; and that can initiate legislation in those areas where the Chief Executive falls short, would not have been met. A strategy of manipulation offers an immediate short-run return; a strategy of reform, the tempting prospect of a long-run benefit that is larger and historically more significant. Even if the President succeeds in the 89th Congress, he must still handle the 90th.

Why should the President risk his power to save Congress as an institution? Because the compelling

forces at work on the domestic and international scenes require increasing, not decreasing, legislative understanding and remedy. If Congress cannot act, these remedies will have to be found elsewhere — most probably through the assertion of ever stronger executive authority or through the already overburdened federal courts. Worse still, they may not be found at all. Either alternative strikes a mortal blow at the foundations of American government and undermines the capacity of the American public to rule itself.

The historic task of breaking the Congressional impasse seems to have been reserved for Lyndon Johnson. For 30 years a legislator, certainly the most eminent and influential Majority Leader in Senate experience, his grasp of Congressional operations is deep and his commitment to the legislative process abiding. As Senate Majority Leader, he modified the seniority principle through his rule that every Democratic Senator, whatever his age or tenure, be granted at least one major committee assignment.

Now as President, Johnson can help Congress to overcome its inhibiting habits. He is both President and leader of the majority party in Congress. Drawing on these wellsprings of power, on his new mandate, the enlarged number of his adherents in Congress, and his inimitable capacity for personal persuasion, President Johnson can decisively influence the movement to restyle Congress. Congress can be led to discard its anachronous practices; Rule 22 and the seniority system can be recast, though not necessarily entirely abandoned; and party government through a revived Democratic caucus that can exercise influence over committee operations, as it did under President Wilson, can be reinstated. The legacy of a modernized Congress would be Johnson's most historic achievement, transcending in stature the specific pieces of legislation that he will undoubtedly coax through the legislative labyrinth.

EDWARD A. KOLODZIEJ

PROFESSOR KOLODZIEJ is on leave from the University of Virginia to complete a work on Congress and military policy.

CORRECTION — In our lead note last week ("Back to Work") we stated that a Gallup Poll of October, 1961 showed John F. Kennedy the choice of 61 percent of the voters — Mr. Goldwater 39 percent. That poll was of voter preference as between Mr. Kennedy and Richard Nixon, Kennedy receiving 62 percent, Nixon 38 percent.

Speaking of Reorganization

Before Mr. Johnson can get very far along with building the Great Society, he will need to send off someone with chart and flashlight to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The Secretary of HEW, Mr. Celebrezze, is but the latest to disappear within this labyrinth, where there now is a great stirring in anticipation of the next Secretary, poor soul, be it Willard Wirtz, Esther Peterson, Sargent Shriver or some sacrificial Texan. From locked closets in the basement, issue forlorn cries for a Mr. McNamara, the ace pathfinder, to come down with a light.

For one thing the new man will need to throw a sharp light on the US Public Health Service, one of HEW's constituents, which of late has been wandering rather far afield from health into the administration of water and air pollution.

Dr. Luther Terry, the Surgeon General, in his area is more powerful than the HEW Secretary. He can get pretty much what he wants and what he wants has to do with satisfying the interests, some might say bureaucratic greed, of his cadre of commissioned officers, "the Club," as it is familiarly known. Traditionally the Health Service has functioned best in providing advice and technical assistance to state health officers. And it has sought to operate the water pollution program in just this manner. Its philosophy is that the complicated interstate pollution problems can be solved by bringing together state health people, scientists and technicians in coffee klatches where the findings of scientific research are made known. Such information then can instruct the subsequent activities of the state officials. The trouble is that federal research into pollution frequently makes the state officers look like slackers, which they are; but one of the rules of the Public Health Service club is that you don't call your pal a slacker; instead, you suggest that the problem is far more complicated than expected and that there is need for another bout of research all round. This is pleasing to everyone: to the state officials who don't want to be shown up, the state politicians who don't want to push their constituents into paying higher taxes for new sewers, and the state governments who don't care to scare off business by demanding installation of costly waste disposal plants. The scientists and engineers are delighted, for it means more work. As for the populace, it is given the pleasant sensation of vast scientific excursions, undertaken in the name of progress.

The air pollution program which is just starting up is molded after the one for water, and already the same pattern is beginning to show there.

It would make a good deal more sense for both these

programs to be removed from the Public Health Service and put into a new administration, headed by an assistant secretary of HEW and made responsible directly to the secretary's office. This would include both air and water pollution enforcement sections, the administration of construction grants and the research functions on which any government activity must be based. There is no reason to think that even the rather weak enforcement legislation will not work if given a chance. On paper the government lays out a program for pollution abatement. It then can offer grants to communities which need to build sewers. It also should be able to offer incentives to business, perhaps in the form of a tax break, to offset expenses for complicated waste disposal. Should these incentives fail, the government must make clear it will bang heads to get things done, and waste no time in going to court.

As for the pesticide licensing operation, lodged in the Agriculture Department, it is even more antediluvian and it too could well be removed to the new administration. It makes little sense for Agriculture, which has strong interests in developing pesticides, also to sit in judgment on their use. Before a pesticide is licensed its manufacturer should have to answer some very harsh questions put by people concerned with conservation and health. The final decision should be made by people with wider interests than the multiplication of the cotton surplus.

In this connection, the government needs authority to stop on short notice the application of pesticides when their usage has been brought in doubt. This year, even though one branch of the government (the PHS) raised grave questions concerning endrin's effects on public health, another branch (Agriculture) paid not the slightest heed. The pesticide continues in use. It should have been removed from the market unless and until testing showed it to be harmless.

Freed of the cumbersome pollution programs, the Public Health Service could get busy with the important task of improving the quality of medical services throughout the country. This is an enormous job and one which the PHS is uniquely equipped to handle. The poor get woefully little medical attention. The PHS should go into the city slums and help build and staff clinics; it should help the states to improve facilities in rural areas, particularly in the Southern countryside. It will not be competing with private medicine in these areas. In such a capacity the Public Health Service might well set an example of social responsibility from which the rest of the profession could profit.

JAMES RIDGEWAY

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

Poetry of the Assassination

by Reed Whittemore

Though poetry in our prose time has practically no public role, it is obviously still to be reckoned with in the quiet corner of the self. As a people we may read no poetry – but give us an atom bomb or its equivalent and we jump into verse like lemmings. One editor of a literary weekly, swamped by Kennedy poems, observed unhappily that the assassination “caught the

Of Poetry and Power
edited by Erwin A. Glikes
and Paul Schwaber
(Basic Books; \$5.95)

imagination of inferior poets,” to which the only rejoinder is, Yes, and it caught the imagination of superior poets too. Not all the world’s known poets seem to have actually produced poems about the assassination, but the impulse to produce them seems to have been fairly universal. Up to now, I have not accepted the old proposition, “There are no atheists in foxholes”; now I am inclined to credit it so long as I may define an atheist as a non-poet. As we all sat last November in that dark Dallas foxhole, the Muses suddenly came over us.

When we describe the outburst of poetry attending the assassination of President Kennedy, we may say that in this instance poetry served as a kind of temple where the conventionally pious and the conventionally impious could gather together under the stress of that unwarranted, unreasonable, vastly subversive death. And we may add that we were all poets then whether we wrote or not. The event itself was poetic; certainly the assassination served to remind even the most alienated and purified of poets of their deep social or environmental dependencies.

The editors of the new Kennedy collection, *Of Poetry and Power*, report

that they were cautioned, by a number of potential contributors to the volume, about the private nature of modern poetry, told that it has no wide audience and cannot “properly attempt a public voice and public responsibility.” But having reported these cautions they ignored them and went ahead anyway, not sure whether they had on their hands literature or sociology. I sympathize with them, for I am not sure either. There are a number of good poems in the book, such as the long and impressive tribute by Edward Pols; a number of bad poems, such as the wild Corso affair where everything from zeppelins to Assyrians gets thrown into the pie; and a number of poems that simply leave me numb, notably poems in which the myth of the Wild West is invoked in mannered fashion. But as I read them all as a group I get the uneasy feeling – uneasy for the poet part of me anyway – that somehow the merits of the book are not related to the merits of the poems in it. To put it cruelly, at times the book manages only to demonstrate that we had poetic feelings about our President, bully for us.

A few of the poets, notably John Berryman in what is probably the best poem in the book, were clearly bothered by this problem, the problem of how *being poetic* fitted in. Berryman leaned way over backwards to deny that he had any high-verse aspirations.

My breath comes heavy, does my
breath.
I feel heavy about the President’s
death.

Similarly several others adopted a tough, gangsterish, anti-poetic manner as if they were embarrassed – and doubtless they were – to find themselves, modern poets, suddenly at work

in the elegy business. Harvey Shapiro:

The National Cold Storage Com-
pany contains
More things than you can dream of.

Thus one can learn a good deal about what has happened to the tradition of the public elegy by reading the book. Even Milton, you will remember, was accused by Samuel Johnson of self indulgence in *Lycidas*, yet Milton was at least at work in a going form, a form he could expect his readers to accept as communal and liturgical rather than private, his own. We have no Miltons now, or if we do they are the inferior poets that the editor I referred to was depressed by, poets who have little sense of what our rhetoric has come to. Allen Tate makes an interesting distinction, in one of his essays about Southern literature, between the rhetorical mode of the 19th Century South, where florid outpourings were as much a part of the poetic as the political scene, and the dialectical mode of the 20th Century, where we find the rostrum mode supplanted by something appropriate to the study or the woods, the mode of the private man investigating his own feelings. Mr. Tate’s observation may be transferred to the poems of the Kennedy book, for there also the rhetorical mode has been supplanted; the assassination is most movingly treated as a private event.

Yet having pointed to this disposition toward privacy in the poems, we must still reckon with the basic impulse to express – that is, to press or squeeze out, not in – which was clearly at work in the original impulse to write the poems at all. It was as if the poets had been struggling to remove themselves from their TV chambers and

NEXT WEEK

Christmas Book Review



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rush into the town square and be heard, be listened to, be seen—perhaps as patriots, perhaps as indignant defenders of law and order, perhaps simply as human beings stirred up to their humanity—but struggling, whatever their reasons, to be involved. For decades our pundits, greater and lesser, have been telling us that America is capable of being involved, engaged; they have observed that in a crisis we wake from our dreams of anarchy and dissension to become, to the astonishment of our enemies, a powerful national entity. Yet there was no national enemy here—the loner image of Oswald still stands—and indeed the response to the assassination was not particularly nationalistic; so whatever it was that produced the poetic impulse toward engagement it cannot have been quite the same as that which produced our solidarity in, say, World War II. The poets didn't do well by World War II, though they were in it. The poets haven't done well as poets by the nation in any crisis. Yet suddenly they did well at Kennedy's death, did well in the sense that they wrote or wanted to write poetry by the ream. Why?

The old Aristotelian doctrine for tragedy, that it should imitate the actions of a noble or good man (one who, though marred by error or frailty, is "highly renowned and prosperous—a personage like Oedipus, Thyestes, or other illustrious men of such families") has been suspicious doctrine for us for some time. We have not found persons in high places or of illustrious families worthy of imitation. We have seldom accredited public officials with heroic stature (in fact their public roles have tended, in our minds, to get in the way of their private virtues, when we thought they had any). According to true democratic doctrine we have regarded our leaders as servants rather than leaders, hence not persons to be imitated. Nothing has been more alien to our all-out democracy than Aristotle's doctrine. And suddenly: Kennedy. It is perhaps not relevant to ask whether Kennedy was in fact the model Aristotelian hero he should have been for the occasion, but it is surely relevant that we as a people were willing to accept him as one, willing to accept him

as a public model of the private hope. The rare possibility of a leader who could express the democratic mystique and yet be a leader rather than an administrator, a bureaucrat, a servant — this possibility suddenly was revealed to us, too late, a year ago. In that lost possibility was the poetry, or a part of it. As Pils put it in his last lines,

But though your life is gone and my youth
I see you now in truth

Criminal Insanity: Facts or Strategy

by Thomas S. Szasz

This is a book for people with short memories. They might enjoy it. For others, however, this book may be boring or annoying.

Let me say at the outset that I have long admired Mr. Belli for his legal defense of those injured by medical procedures. This aspect of his work has been imaginative, fearless, and pioneering. However, in the Ruby trial, I be-

Dallas Justice: The Real Story of Jack Ruby and his Trial
by Melvin Belli
with Maurice C. Carroll
(McKay; \$5.50)

lieve that Mr. Belli made a serious error in having Ruby plead not guilty by reason of insanity. Moreover, in the course of the trial, the clearer it became that this was an error, the more stubbornly Mr. Belli seemed to cling to it. Belli has now compounded his original error: he has written a highly slanted, propagandistic account of the trial.

There can be no doubt about one fact: Mr. Belli is an enthusiastic advocate. He is still arguing that Ruby did not know what he was doing when he shot Oswald and ought to have been acquitted as not guilty by reason of insanity. Is it possible that Mr. Belli has become the victim of his own strategy? That he has confused a legal tactic with a scientific explanation? This book suggests that Mr. Belli really believes that "justice" would have been better

Transfigured, resplendent in our ruth.

They say you were still half symbol,
Being given so little time;
Come, let us take you so, but in this sense:

In that region of possibility you fill
There, still, your bright incontinent essence

Inclines to its own completion, still
Shapes almost its own actuality, still contrives

Some reason, measure, humor in our lives.

served by acquitting Ruby than by finding him guilty and meting out some punishment for his deed (not necessarily the death penalty).

Why did Mr. Belli agree to defend Mr. Ruby? Not for money. "I seek in this book," says Belli, "to pursue the fivefold goal that I set for myself in the trial: To save Jack Ruby, to strengthen our law, to demonstrate the inadequacy of the archaic McNaughten Rule in legal insanity, to wed more securely modern science to modern law, to help Dallas solve its problems."

But how did Belli know, only three days after Oswald was shot and before seeing Ruby, that a psychiatric defense was "scientifically" indicated in this case? This is only the first of a great many disturbing questions that could be asked about Belli's strategy, questions he neither bothers to ask nor to answer.

It seems that Belli knew no more about Ruby's mental condition when he accepted the case than did anyone else who watched television and read the newspapers. Three days after Jack Ruby shot Lee Oswald, Earl Ruby came to California and asked Belli to take the case: "... we agreed to go ahead with the case. I would have found it hard to resist. This was a big trial that could focus worldwide attention on mental health and its unsatisfactory archaic relationship to the law."

The conclusion is inescapable that Belli had decided, the moment he con-

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sidered defending Ruby, to use the insanity ploy. It is easy to imagine, moreover, why he might have done so: any lawyer, even the most inexperienced and obscure one, could have pleaded Ruby guilty to the crime, and concentrated on trying to establish the lack of real premeditation. But this would have required no Belli! He was going to have his client walk out of the courtroom a free man. Clearly, there was only one strategy for accomplishing this—namely, pleading temporary insanity. In this book, Mr. Belli is still trying to pull off this daring coup. I think he has failed again.

To win the case, Belli had to prove—not beyond any reasonable doubt, but to the satisfaction of the jury—that, when Ruby shot Oswald, he was so mentally ill that he was unable to distinguish right from wrong—in other words, that he did not know what he was doing. If Ruby was in a fugue state, acting like an automaton, why

did he shoot Oswald and not someone else? But Mr. Belli does not carry his dissatisfaction with the McNaughten Rule this far. He does not want to foster skepticism about the courtroom use of psychiatry (as I do)—he wants to use psychiatry for his own purposes.

Indeed, Mr. Belli loves to call people “sick.” Oswald was mentally sick. Ruby, of course, was also mentally sick. “I would like,” writes Belli movingly, “to hear an American judge say, ‘I sentence you to jail till cured’. Not that everyone who commits a crime is crazy, of course.” Of course not: only those whom Mr. Belli and his psychiatrists so diagnose.

While we cannot here consider the troublesome question of what “mental illness” is, it should be clear that there is a fundamental difference between a logical proposition (like “snow is white”), and a strategic utterance (like “Better Buy Buick”). The former as-

serts a fact; the latter promotes a course of action. Furthermore, regardless of the linguistic form of the assertion, there are certain social situations that make statements of facts do the work of strategic recommendations. For example, it is one thing to inquire into the religious beliefs of persons in the course of studying the incidence of trichinosis in New York City, and quite another to have done so in the course of “protecting” national security in Nazi Germany. I submit that in a court of law—especially when a sensational murder case is being tried—*everything* that is said (or not said) has strategic import: it helps either to convict or to acquit the defendant. I am sure no one knows this better than Mr. Belli. But he admits to none of this in his book. He insists on defining the controversy about Jack Ruby’s mental state as a scientific problem—rather than as a problem of moral decision-making, which is subsequently justified and rationalized on scientific grounds.

Belli takes very seriously his contention that Ruby did not know, and still doesn’t know, why he killed Oswald. It is, of course, convenient for him to do so. He quotes Ruby: “We know I did it for Jackie and the kids. I just went in and shot him. . . . Maybe I ought to forget this silly story that I’m telling, and get on the stand and tell the truth.”

This does not seem to bother Belli. By viewing Ruby’s mind as a thing that has an “inside” which psychiatrists can inspect, he can discount or accept what he wants from Ruby’s statements: “At that point, with his mental examinations behind him and the outline of our defense clearly established, he was suddenly ready to admit that he had shot Lee Harvey Oswald deliberately and that our contention that the shooting had occurred during a blackout in which he was incompetent to know what he was doing was a fraud. But by that time . . . I was convinced that he wanted to confess to something that he was making up, that his professed knowledge of the shooting was the result of confabulation. . . .”

Unconvincing as Mr. Belli’s thesis is (to me at least), it is virtually destroyed by his own gratuitous comment: “I am sure the story was false because it didn’t square with everything else we

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knew; from the standpoint of legal tactics it was, of course, absolutely useless . . ." (my italics).

Although Mr. Belli does not admit that he is pleading a case, his slanting of the evidence amply demonstrates this. Here are some examples of what I mean.

First, there is Ruby's autobiography, written in collaboration with a Hollywood writer, Bill Woodfield, printed in newspapers from coast to coast. Belli barely alludes to this affair. Yet publishing this story served at least two purposes - to raise money for Ruby's defense, and to prepare public opinion (perhaps even the jury) for Ruby's acquittal as temporarily insane.

Second, Mr. Belli fails to mention the public opinion poll, allegedly undertaken by the defense, reported in *The New York Times* on February 29, 1964. At the time of the first sampling, on December 16 (approximately three weeks after Mr. Belli was retained as chief defense counsel), 66 percent of the people polled in Dallas thought Ruby was sane when he shot Oswald. The next sampling was taken in Houston, February 8, immediately after Ruby's autobiography had run in *The Houston Chronicle*; only 36 percent of those polled said Ruby was sane. The third and final polling was again in Dallas, on February 9: the proportion of those who believed that Ruby was sane had now declined from 66 percent to 40 percent. The advertising campaign to sell Ruby's insanity seemed to have had palpable results. (The district attorney's office was also doing its share to try Ruby, as it had Oswald, first in the newspapers, and only later in court. This justifies Mr. Belli's tactics only if we believe that two wrongs make a right.)

There is much more of this kind of slanting. Indeed, Mr. Belli applies, with hardly any modification, the methods appropriate to pleading a case in court to the writing of what is alleged to be history - that is, adducing only those facts favorable to his client, and omitting everything else. Only in this light can we explain the omission in this book of a letter to the editor of *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (published on April 13, 1964), signed by Dr. Francis M. Forster,

Professor of Neurology at the University of Wisconsin; Dr. Roland P. McKay, Professor of Neurology at Northwestern University Medical School; Peter Kellaway, PhD, of Houston; Dr. Robert S. Schwab, Associate Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School; and Dr. A. Earl Walker, Professor of Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Medical School. It reads as follows:

"The undersigned testified at the recent trial of Jack Ruby for and at the request of the state. We submit the following statements to the many physicians responsible for the health and peace of mind of nearly one million patients with various types of epileptic seizures. 1. Neither the clinical history nor the electroencephalogram of Mr. Ruby indicated any definite evidence of epilepsy. 2. Epileptic seizures are never associated with complicated and planned criminal acts of violence. 3. Epileptics are as safe to be with as any group of people except in extremely rare and usually predictable situations."

This is the kind of evidence that Mr. Belli was asking the Dallas jury to reject. And, because they refused to reject it, he is asking us to believe that it was an anti-Semitic and corrupt jury.

Basically, Belli's defense of Ruby rested on the proposition that Ruby did not kill Oswald because he *wanted* to, but because he had *epilepsy*. Whether or not this claim is found credible depends largely on those who do the judging. As we know, criminal acts have been attributed to all sorts of "causes" - witchcraft, epilepsy, mental illness. Today, no American believes that witchcraft can cause murder. However, many - though evidently not as many as Belli had thought - believe that epilepsy can cause murder. And many more believe - indeed, this is considered quite sophisticated nowadays - that mental illness can cause murder.

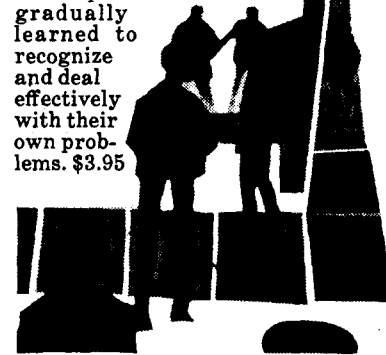
How can epilepsy cause murder? As I have tried to show, the idea is preposterous. Moreover, Ruby did not suffer from clinically overt epilepsy - even the defense admitted that much. His only neurological abnormality was a

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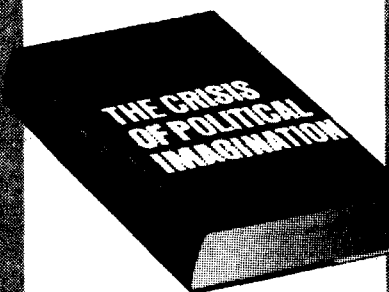
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slightly irregular electroencephalogram. In evaluating the significance of this finding, it is necessary to keep in mind that approximately one person in eight has an electroencephalogram that deviates from the normal. If Ruby deserves an acquittal as not guilty by reason of insanity on the basis of this finding (and the completely unproven assumption that he was in a fugue state) — so does every eighth person now convicted of crime (assuming the same incidence of electroencephalographic abnormalities in this group as among those not accused of crime).

It is a great tribute to American medicine that the defense was unable to find a single clinical neurologist or neurosurgeon (the medical specialists who know most about epilepsy as a disease) who would testify that Ruby's act was attributable to his alleged epilepsy. The prosecution had no such difficulty: Several authorities testified that (a) Ruby did not have epilepsy, and that (b) his questionably abnormal electroencephalographic tracing had no bearing on his shooting Oswald.

Indeed, the medical profession, through its official publication, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, denounced, as baseless, the impression created by Mr. Belli and his experts that there is a causal connection between epilepsy and antisocial behavior, especially murder. (None of this is mentioned in Mr. Belli's book.) An editorial in that *Journal* (April 13, 1964), flatly asserted that there is no evidence that epileptics commit more crimes than nonepileptics, and added:

"Many years of work on the part of many people — professionals and others — to gain a measure of public acceptance of epilepsy as a physical (not a mental) disability, will be set back — way back — because of the completely presumptive classification of epilepsy with murder throughout the Jack Ruby trial. . . . An epileptic might kill, not because he has epilepsy, but because he is a human being."

This, precisely, is the point: is an individual accused of crime — Jack Ruby in this case — a person or a thing? Is he a moral agent, with human dignity

and legal responsibility — or is he a defective object, which, if attached to a gun, might kill someone, but which has neither a will of its own nor responsibility for its malfunctioning?

Mr. Belli, though believing to act from humanitarian motives, has treated Ruby as if he belonged in the latter category. He assures us, in the second line of the Foreword, that Ruby's conversation with Chief Justice Warren was "pitiful"; later he tells us that Ruby's claim that he shot Oswald to protect Mrs. Kennedy is a "confabulation," a mere symptom of Ruby's serious mental illness — not his real motive (in other words, Ruby does not, but Belli does, know what is in Ruby's mind — the classic formulation of mentally ill man as defective machine); finally, Belli also dismisses, as still another manifestation of Ruby's mental illness, his wish to "confess" his responsibility for the shooting and not plead insanity.

Writes Mr. Belli:

"Would it have been moral to take this sick man, this mental cripple, and have him grovel, 'I'm just a Jew-boy and I'm sorry. Please forgive me'? I can't agree that demeaning Ruby in that way would have been right, tactically any more than morally."

This is a matter of judgment and opinion, and Mr. Belli has as much right to his as anyone else. But it is difficult for me to see what is so demeaning about admitting to a wrongdoing. On the contrary, I believe that had Ruby followed his own inclinations as he presumably did when he shot Oswald, he would have succeeded — at a price, to be sure — in enhancing the significance of his life, which, as he had been living it, may have held little meaning for him.

Freud's credo was: Where id was, ego shall be. By this he meant that the psychiatrist's task is to make sense of what seems senseless. It is ironic, indeed, that today, in the US, the most enthusiastic advocates of mental health should invoke Freud's name, and use his language, to achieve a diametrically opposite goal: to render senseless what is a matter of common sense.

A Handful of Waugh

by Stanley Kauffmann

This is only an interim report because it deals only with the first volume of an as-yet incomplete autobiography. Worse, much of the first volume is about the least interesting part of any subject's life—his childhood, when he is more like everyone else than he is likely to be again. But for those already engaged by Waugh, particularly those (like me) who consider him a genius,

*A Little Learning:
An Autobiography
The Early Years
by Evelyn Waugh
(Little, Brown; \$5)*

his autobiography is irresistible and the first volume unavoidable.

About the prose itself, little more needs to be said than that his essay style has never been more Handelian. Waugh—not all that old, actually, only 61—has decided to write his life story because he has reached what he thinks is the proper age. ("Only when one has lost all curiosity about the future has one reached the age to write an autobiography.") In this book he takes us from his pre-history up to a youthful moment of despair, after he had quit his first post-Oxford teaching job, when he more or less attempted to drown himself in the sea. The sting of a jellyfish dispelled his black mood and made him return to shore. The last line: "Then I climbed the sharp hill that led to all the years ahead." He was not yet a published writer, a husband, or a Roman Catholic.

He tells us at just bearable length about his forebears, who were neither eccentric nor attractive enough for much discussion—a rather usual bunch of professional men and clergymen. The only really striking portrait is that of his father, a prominent editor and minor *litterateur*, a quietly beneficial influence on contemporary writers, whose firm distinctions between private and professional life seem quaintly archaic in the light of current British-American publishers' practices. Waugh anatomizes the characters of his great-

grandparents and grandparents to discover the strains that, he believes, have combined in him.

"Such, then, are the materials of which I am made. The body, which includes the mind and nerves, is a link in a heterogeneous concatenation; the soul is a separate creation."

Anti-rationalist still, he discards science to compare heredity with poker. He ex-

plains the difference between his brother and himself as those between two hands dealt from the same deck of cards. Psychology, even more than biology, gets short and sharp shrift. Waugh *vs.* the 20th Century, sometimes a grave and important battle, is here a moderately amusing joust.

His early boyhood was spent in Hampstead, which was then much more rural than suburban (and is now more urban). But he makes no sentimental caterwauling about the topographical changes in England. He simply clarifies that it is "impossible for the young, difficult for the elderly" to see the world as it was. Even the latter can be misled by the continuity of a place-

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name into thinking that the place is the same. (I, thirteen years younger than Waugh, used to pass a blacksmith shop on my way to grammar school, in the now-chic East 60's of Manhattan.) His treatment of this matter is typical of one of his modes: affection underscored by brusque flourishes of concentration on the facts, rather than on the feelings created by the facts.

His early schooling reveals only a few matters of note. Among them: he was bright but, before he finished public school, fashionably bored; he was fascinated by calligraphy and studied it with a pudgy eccentric who lived near his school; he had an early interest in the authenticities of religion and tradition. His behavior, his boyhood diaries, his comments on those diaries, substantiate implicitly some of the psychological theory he disputes explicitly.

His Oxford life, which he clearly loved, reveals a change of key. His previous schooldays showed him reasonably industrious and serious; in his Oxford days he took the social life as a prime part of his education: the parties, jokes, special clubs, relatively heavy drinking. It all seems a bit "mad twenties" now and seems to have been considerably modified in the next Oxford decade; but it cannot be claimed that this life was ruinous. Some of his friends were Anthony Powell, Claud Cockburn, Peter Quennell, Alfred Duggan, Christopher Hollis, Harold Acton, and the present Lord Gardiner.

The reader of a novelist's autobiography cannot avoid playing the game of sources, wondering whether this or that was the original of a setting or character. Waugh is aware of this and sometimes sets us straight by denial or hint.

"In a novel (*Brideshead Revisited*) which portrays some aspects of my Oxford life I gave a description of two undergraduates made free of a fine cellar and exulting in their acquaintance with wine. That was never my happy experience. . . . In fact we drank copiously but indiscriminately. . . ."

"A very surprising man . . . had come to take the place . . . as second-master. . . . He later provided

certain features for the character, 'Captain Grimes', in my first novel."

After Oxford he spent some months in art school, before he went on to the teaching post that he later immortalized—not too strong a word—in *Decline and Fall*. Reproductions of some of his drawings and woodcuts display a competent devotion to the "moderne" but show that he did not mistake his true vocation.

In the last chapter there is a brief account of an early love, discreetly stated and moving. The girl did not requite it; in fact, she died a spinster in early middle age. His description of her is one of the masterly touches:

"A book, a play, a film, a ballet, a new, and usually deleterious friend, a public injustice, generally known and generally accepted, but suddenly discovered by Olivia, would totally engage her for a time; these crazes were mitigated by a peculiar fastidi-

ousness, which did not prevent her from saying and doing outrageous things, but preserved her essential delicacy quite intact; also by shyness which made her unwilling to make any friends save those who were attracted by her and forced their way into her confidence. She nagged and bullied at times, she suffered from morbid self-consciousness, she was incapable of the ordinary arts and efforts of pleasing and was generally incapable of any kind of ostentation; a little crazy; truth-loving and in the end holy."

But that is enough from and about this book—which is not a book, only a separately bound portion of a work in progress. The author doubtless had his reasons for issuing it by itself, not all of which are apparent. It is a compliment to this (presumably) least interesting part to say that it does nothing to diminish eagerness for the rest.

THEATER

We Are Two Cultural Nations

This has been a period of dejection and exhilaration, of baffled promise and shining possibility, of grinding failure and monumental achievement—a period that has shown us the worst and the best of our cultural times. For within three days after the Repertory

The Changeling
by Thomas Middleton &
William Rowley

(Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center)

The Old Glory
by Robert Lowell
(American Place Theater)

Theater of Lincoln Center exposed to public shock and ridicule an outrageously incompetent production of *The Changeling*, the American Place Theater opened its doors on a fascinating pair of plays by Robert Lowell, brilliantly written, superbly directed, and acted with incomparable grace, taste,

and style. The conjunction of these two events is a portent of more than passing significance, because it heralds the eventual supersession of something worn-out and sterile by a force of genuine vitality and intelligence. Since most of the local reviewers were predictably dull-witted about both plays, both were misrepresented in the press. But although the impact of these two events will therefore take a while to have its effect on the public consciousness, some issues are being clarified which have hitherto been inchoate and confused. These issues are crucial, for they concern the whole future direction of the serious American stage. The present theater establishment is now in a state of crisis, collapsing from within and sieged from without, and at the same time that a new foundation is just in process of being built, the old, eroded masonry is falling in ruins about our heads.

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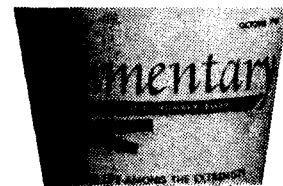
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the stage at the ANTA-Washington Square Theater, where the Lincoln Center Company is currently doing a wrecker's job on *The Changeling*. This is Elia Kazan's first experience with a non-contemporary, non-American play, and, as one of those who has been exhorting this director and his company to stage the great classical works, I feel acutely embarrassed at having to discuss the results at all. To put no fine point on it, the production is a debacle. Mr. Kazan obviously hasn't an inkling of what *The Changeling* is about, nor, apparently, the slightest interest in trying to find out. Instead of plumbing the depths of this profound work, he has chosen to assault it from without, imposing on its intricate Gothic lines, his own heavy Broadway scaffolding.

Since the play was completely buried under the debris, few members of the audience seemed to realize it was a masterpiece, especially when most of the reviewers made it an occasion for Philistine sneers. Even Walter Kerr—who periodically pays homage to the Elizabethans when he needs a club with which to beat Ibsen and Chekhov on the head—called the play a "pop melodrama," and subtitled it "The Case of the Vicious Virgin." To clear the way of such edifying epithets, perhaps some textual discussion is in order, however brief and superficial, for *The Changeling* is generally acknowledged by scholars of the drama, to be the most subtle psychological tragedy in English outside of Shakespeare. Written in simple, ungorgeous verse, and in that impersonal manner which is the hallmark of Middleton's style, the play—if we ignore the silly subplot contributed by Rowley—is the closest thing to a realistic tragedy in the Stuart canon. Actually, the play foreshadows Strindberg's *Miss Julie*, for it concerns the spiritual degeneration of a young gentlewoman named Beatrice-Isabella, and her gradual habituation to sin, as a result of an uncontrollable appetitive will.

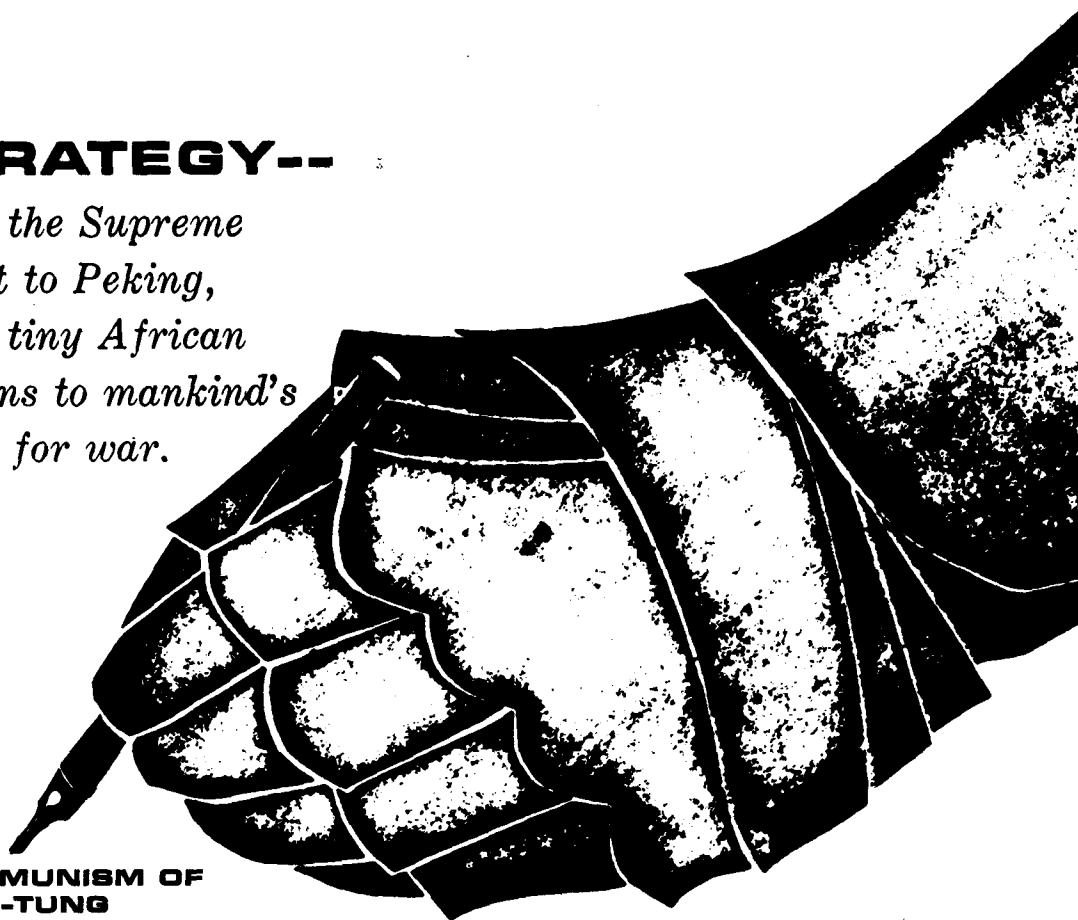
Following the various changes in Beatrice's affections (*change* is the key word of the play), the action opens when she has already transferred her feelings from her first love, Alonzo Piraquo, to a second, Alsemero. Since she is already betrothed to Piraquo, she

can marry Alsemero only by murdering her fiancé; and for this purpose, she hires a creature she instinctually detests, the ugly, dispossessed gentleman, De Flores. But De Flores also has a will, and demands, as payment for the deed, her maidenhead (thus the significance of his name—the Deflowerer). This horrifies Beatrice, whose peculiar ethical blindness lies in valuing her own virginity over everything, including human life ("Why, tis impossible thou canst be so wicked,/ Or shelter such a cunning cruelty/ To make his death the murderer of my honor!"). But the more balanced and self-aware De Flores is adamant, and in a magnificent scene that mixes equal strains of brutality and tenderness, he leads her to her fate, promising "Thou'lt love anon/ What thou so fear'st and faint'st to venture on." Now comes the real audacity of the work. For as the action proceeds, De Flores' prophecy is slowly fulfilled. Beatrice experiences the dawning of genuine love for this loathsome henchman, primarily because he is concerned for what she cherishes most, her outward reputation. When Alsemero discovers her kissing De Flores, she is willing to confess to murder rather than to blemish this reputation; but when all comes out, De Flores kills her and himself, becoming her true partner in death and shame. Thus, *The Changeling* is a variant on the story of Beauty and the Beast, where Beauty is a moral beast, and Beast achieves a certain heroic beauty. Out of a sequence of Tussaud horrors, Middleton snatches a Petrarchan lyricism, making the deaths of these two monsters into a curiously moving *Leibestod*.

Needless to say, the production captures none of this, because Mr. Kazan will not let us hear four consecutive lines of verse before he is introducing his own interpolations—crawling mendicants, hysterical madmen, cavorting monks, scurrying hunters, carousing guests—or shoving his actors into a bed that has been placed conspicuously on the stage. Where Mr. Kazan got that particular piece of furniture I cannot say; maybe it was left over from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*; there is certainly no such bed in the text. But this director is obviously willing to sacrifice everything—plot, character, theme, lan-

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guage, the sense of the past—for the sake of a few prurient giggles from the gallery. Take, as an example, his sorry abuse of the subplot. Now I do not hold that Rowley's witless scenes in the madhouse are essential to a play which would have more formal unity without them. But the subplot serves a dramatic function beyond its grotesque humours: Isabella's relationship to the disguised Antonio is designed to mirror Beatrice's relationship to Alsemero, with a servant, in both cases, putting in for his share. The parallel, however, involves an ironic contrast—while Beatrice falls, Isabella remains chaste—but in Mr. Kazan's version, Isabella bounces merrily into the sack as well, even though this is a direct violation of the whole purpose of the scene. Well, I suppose it is fruitless to discuss thematic purpose when the director is so much more preoccupied with undressing his female characters, and having them copulate before our eyes.

It is also fruitless to discuss the acting, since it is beneath discussion: such a performance would have disgraced the theater club at South Dakota Subnormal Junior High. Barbara Loden has been singled out for special obloquy, and it is true that she is pathetically inadequate to the part of Beatrice. But her vocal and temperamental deficiencies are shared by almost the entire cast, and they have surely been aggravated by the mindlessness and vulgarity of the production (for example, wasn't it possible to advise Miss Loden that you do not express loathing for someone by sticking out your tongue?). Because there are scores of experienced classical actors scattered around the country, the principles behind the hiring and training of this company escape me. But the blame for this particular failure must be spread wide—not only among those responsible for *The Changeling*, but

also among those who have dictated the direction of our stage for the past twenty-five years. The social-psychological theater of the thirties, which culminated in the Actors Studio and Lincoln Center, has now proved itself utterly incompetent to deal with a serious work of the imagination, or anything other than Broadway and Hollywood commodities. And the American theater will never find itself again until all these outmoded methods and limited visions have been swept away.

Just such a renewal seems to be occurring now at the American Place Theater where Robert Lowell's *The Old Glory* is currently enjoying an inspired production by Jonathan Miller. *The Old Glory* consists of two short plays (formerly three), held together by the unifying symbol of a flag—*My Kinsman*, *Major Molineux*, based largely on the Hawthorne story, and *Benito Cereno*, after the novella by Herman Melville. Mr. Lowell has accomplished the extraordinary feat of adapting these stories with relative fidelity to the originals while making them wholly and uniquely his own work. Invested with the author's sharp historical sense and marvelous gift of language, the source materials assume the thickness and authority of myth; American history takes on the quality of metaphor and ritual; traditional American literature begins to function like Greek mythology, as the source and reflection of contemporary behavior. What Mr. Lowell has done so subtly is to superimpose the present on the past, so that the plays manage to look backward and forward at the same time. The works are not easy, for the author has purposely adopted a style which is chilling, measured, and remote, but they are charged with flinty intelligence and taut emotion, and they work on the spectator with the suggestive power of non-discursive poems.

The first and more difficult of the two plays is an eerie parable of the American revolution, experienced, as in a nightmare, by a Deerfield youth and his twelve-year-old brother. Arriving in Boston, the "city of the dead," to seek their kinsman, Major Molineux (a "lobsterback" who symbolizes the British forces in continental America), the

two innocents watch in astonished horror as the revolution is born out of indecision, hatred, resentment and self-interest. The struggle, which culminates in the murder of Molineux, is embodied in the Union Jack and the rattlesnake flag of the incipient republic, and the semi-mythic characters—including a Charon-like ferryman, a vacillating clergyman, a man whose face grows bloody as the bloody event approaches—are identified through their attitude towards these two significant emblems. Jonathan Miller has directed the work in a harrowing manner, using the hallucinatory style of Hogarth drawings or political cartoons by James Gillray: all but the two youths are dressed in blacks and whites, their countenances pastied and topped with powdered wigs, their movement stylized and spasmodic. Aided by an impeccable cast, illustrative costuming by Willa Kim, and spine-tingling musical effect by Yehudi Wyner, this production is surely one of the most brilliant theatrical events since William Ball's *Six Characters*.

Benito Cereno, however, is a good deal more than theatrically impressive: it is a cultural-poetic masterpiece, built on a strong suspenseful narrative. Melville's story largely concerns the shadow cast over a civilized mind by the primitive darkness. Lowell heightens this theme, examining along the way the ambiguous American attitude towards slavery and servitude. The plot concerns the visit of the Yankee merchant captain, Amasa Delano—a typically complacent, chauvinistic, wry, and generous American—to a mysterious slave ship anchored off South America, and captained by a noble Spaniard named Benito Cereno. The ship is a shambles, and the slaves are roaming freely about the deck. When Delano's curiosity and disapproval are aroused, Cereno—dogged and prompted always by his officious, unctuous, smiling slave, Babu—tells a halting, semi-hysterical story of calms, disease, and the loss of most of his crew.

But the story doesn't satisfy Delano, and, upset over the squalor and strangeness of the ship (so shocking to his Yankee sense of order), he finds himself being gradually demoralized by the swelling undulation of the waves,

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Reed Whittemore is consultant in poetry at the Library of Congress. Thomas S. Szasz, MD, is professor of psychiatry at the Upstate Medical Center of the State University of New York and the author of several controversial books on psychiatry and the law.

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the spontaneity of the blacks and their ominous droning, the buzzing of the tropical mosquitoes, and the confused indirections of the obviously anguished Spanish captain. A series of enigmatic rituals and ceremonies are enacted before him, including the humiliation of an African king; he watches Cereno, terrified, being shaved by Babu with the Spanish flag used as an apron; and he begins to realize that, for all his belief in American ideals of freedom, in his heart he wants slaves. At last, he learns that Cereno is actually a prisoner on his own ship, which the rebelling slaves have captured, murdering most of the crew. And when Babu un masks himself as the leader of the rebels, forcing Delano's mate to kiss the lips of a ghastly skeleton and demanding that Delano sail the ship back to Africa, the Yankee shoots him down, crying "This is your future." The final confrontation of Babu and Delano looks forward to the confrontation of black and white in modern America, while the insidious effect of the slave ship on all the whites recalls those horrifying images of primitive envelopment in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

Miller has paced this play with an eye to its half-languorous, half-ominous atmosphere, finally letting it explode into a shocking climax; and he has pulled performances out of his company which are nothing short of marvelous. Three actors in particular—Roscoe Lee Browne, alternating between Calypso sunniness and sinister threat as Babu; Frank Langella, a state-ly but trembling wreck as Cereno; Lester Rawlins, suave and self-satisfied as Delano—are giving the performances of their careers, but the entire cast works with the kind of precision and power we have learned to expect only from well-established repertory companies. It has been a long time since a simple set has been used in such a fluid manner, and even longer since a new playwright of such transcendent artistry has met a new director of such superior imaginativeness on common creative ground.

Instead of rejoicing over this signal occasion, the reviewers for *The New York Times* and *Herald Tribune* devoted their columns to lecturing Mr.

Lowell and Mr. Miller on the requirements of conventional theater, Mr. Kerr even suggesting that the evening would have benefited from a little Broadway "pressure." Thus, no doubt, did Chekhov's Russian critics reproach him for ignoring the old theatrical formulas, and thus have the guardians of the tried-and-true always responded to the advances of the creative spirit. Well, let us confront the implication of these events squarely—in a cultural sense, we are two nations. Our theater has maintained a monolithic mediocrity for so long that men of intelligence have all but disappeared from both sides of the proscenium. But now that Robert Lowell, Jonathan Miller, and the American Place have found each other, they must be permitted to find a suitable audience, and develop their vision in appreciative surroundings. How this can be achieved when the newspaper reviewers are still arbitrating success and failure in the theater, I cannot say, but I am willing to make a practical suggestion in the form of a pact. If Mr. Kerr and Mr. Taubman will promise never again to review a serious work of dramatic art, I for one will offer never to cover another musical, commercial comedy, or melodrama. This may sound like a desperate notion, but the fiasco at Lincoln Center and the triumph at the American Place have taught us that we must now be willing to accept the consequences of a split culture. The dramatic imagination will never be permitted to expand in this country until it can function independently of the present theater establishment; and that establishment is now discrediting itself so completely that one begins to have faith, at last, that such an expansion may soon take place.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN

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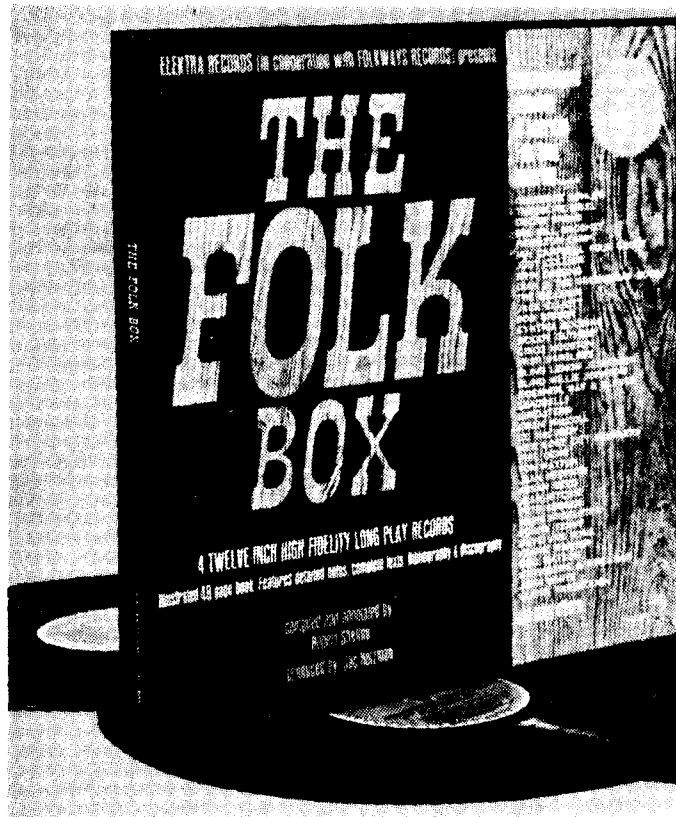
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